

uncomfortable with doing that. This particular tax is a tax that is supported by people. It is supported by smokers and nonsmokers. You will find that the opposition somewhat dissipates, even from some smokers, when they realize that it's going to fund some of the evils that they are aware of, that are just hooked on a habit that they...a lot of them just simply would not like to continue on but it is very difficult to get away from. The bottom line, polls that have been done show that as many as 74 percent of Nebraskans or, excuse me, 74 percent of Americans would support increasing the tax on cigarettes, some polls showed as high as \$2 a pack, to fund health care problems. It's simply not an unpopular tax, if it is going, if it is tied back into the health problems that are created by the product they use. I just don't think that this is...I think this is much more publicly received...received better publicly than is a General Fund tax increase. It is tied into the harm being done. I would simply urge that LB 595 be advanced to E & R Initial.

SENATOR HALL: Thank you, Senator Lindsay. You've heard the closing on the motion to advance LB 595 to E & R Initial. All those in favor vote aye, opposed nay. Have you all voted? Record, Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: 26 ayes, 5 nays, Mr. President, on the advancement of LB 595.

SENATOR HALL: LB 595 is advanced. Before we move on to the next bill, Senator Lindsay, if you would come up to the desk, please. Senator...excuse me, Senator Lindsay, yes. Senator McKenzie has 26 guests in the south balcony. They're seventh and eighth graders from Silver Creek and they have their chaperones with them. Would you please stand and be recognized by the Legislature. Thank you for coming today. Mr. Clerk, items for the record.

CLERK: Nothing at this time, Mr. President. Thank you.

SENATOR HALL: LB 397 then, Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: LB 397, Mr. President, was a bill that was originally introduced by Senator Hall at the request of the Governor. (Read title.) The bill was introduced on January 14, Mr. President. It was referred to the Government, Military and Veterans Affairs Committee for hearing. The bill was advanced to General File. I have no amendments to the bill at this time.